THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENCE PRODUCTION AND SUPPLIES IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHIVRAJ PATIL): (a) The MBT project was sanctioned in March 74 at a cost of Rs. 15.50 crores (FE Rs. 3.70 crores). It was anticipated to commence the bulk production of the tank in 1984. The latest revised sanction of the project approved in May 87, stands at Rs. 280.80 crores (FE Rs. 102.32 crores). The present plans are to commence the bulk production of the tank from 1990 onwards.

(b) and (c) MBT-ARJUN has not so far been test evaluated by the users'. Some of the R&D Prototypes have been examined by the users on the request of R&D to report any shortcomings in the R&D prototypes themselves before user prototypes are handed over to them. This is the usual practice for major systems where user interaction is solicited from the start. In the light of this, they have made some recommendations which are being studied and some have already been accepted to be introduced in the later prototypes. The question of the Army not accepting the MBT therefore does not arise. As MBT is today, it meets the GS QR of the Army.

(d) There are no defects in design and hence the question of fixing of responsibility does not arise. The cost and time overruns have been necessitated due to major changes in the Qualitative Requirements by the Users, advances in technology, increase in number of prototypes and manufacture of preproduction series tanks.

Thakkar Commission to enquire into Fairfax

4049. SHRI LAL K. ADVANI: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) the date on which Thakkar Commission was appointed to enquire into Fairfax and when did it start

(b) on what date, its procedure for working was announced and what was the procedure so announced?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF EXPENDITURE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI B. K. GADHVI): (a) Justices Thakkar-Natarajan Commission of Inquiry was constituted on 6th April, 1987 and the Commission started functioning with effect from 20th April, 1987.

(b) Under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 and the Commissions of Inquiry (Central) Rules, 1972, the Commission of Inquiry is empowered to regulate its own procedure. The regulations of procedure to be followed by Justices Thakkar-Natarajan Commission of Inquiry were framed on 25th April, 1987 and modified on 4th and 5th June, 1987. These regulations are not required to be announced/published.

Gadgil formula for Central Assistance

4050. SHRI M. S. GURUPADASWAMY:

DR. BAPU KALDATE:

Will the Minister of PLANNING be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a number of Chief Ministers have requested for changes in the Gadgil formula which is the basis on which the States are allocated Central Assistance for their five year plan;

(b) if so, whether Government have considered the request of the State Government; and

(c) if answer to part (b) above is in negative what are the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION (SHRI SUKH RAM): (a) Yes, Sir.